Exports of Petroleum Products
1987

National Energy Board
Staff Report

April 1988

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Cat. No. NE1-3/1987-E
ISBN 0-662-16177-7

This report is published separately in both official languages.

Copies are available on request from:

Regulatory Support Office
National Energy Board
473 Albert Street
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0E5
(613) 998-7204

Printed in Canada

Ce rapport est publié séparément dans les deux langues officielles.

Exemplaires disponibles auprès du:

Bureau du soutien de la réglementation
Office national de l'énergie
473, rue Albert
Ottawa (Canada)
K1A 0E5
(613) 998-7204

Imprimé au Canada

92-04679/

Foreword

In March 1985, the Federal government and the governments of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan reached a comprehensive agreement concerning oil and gas. The agreement - The Western Accord - among other things called for the deregulation of crude oil and petroleum product prices and the removal of various taxes and charges applicable to oil.

The role of the National Energy Board changed with the Western Accord from one of strictly regulating oil exports and export prices primarily to one of monitoring oil markets and reporting to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources on oil export matters. As part of its monitoring function, the Board has issued, on a yearly basis, reports on crude oil and petroleum product exports. This is the third such report on petroleum product exports and covers the calendar year 1987. A discussion of petroleum product imports is included in order to put exports in the context of the overall trade.

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Executive Summary

In 1987, oil prices firmed considerably in comparison to the low prices in 1986. The Canadian petroleum industry has now operated for over two and a half years in a deregulated environment. The following points provide the highlights of 1987 with respect to exports of petroleum products.

Volumes

Exports of petroleum products in 1987 averaged 22.2 thousand cubic metres per day, an increase of 15 percent from the 1986 level of 19.3 thousand cubic metres per day (Page 4).

Exports of middle distillate and aviation turbine fuel registered the largest gains in 1987 compared to 1986. Motor gasoline exports were slightly lower while shipments of heavy fuel oil and partially processed oil were approximately the same (Page 4).

Prices

Export prices for light petroleum products remained relatively close to spot prices in the United States; the heavy fuel oil export price was below the New York spot price in the beginning of the year but remained quite close for the remainder of the year (Page 7).

The price of motor gasoline exported from Ontario was below Toronto Rack and Bulk Spot prices while the furnace oil export price was relatively close to the Toronto Spot price but below the Rack price (Page 10).

Industry Trends

Canada's trade in petroleum products was not as widely distributed internationally in comparison to 1986. Exports were made to five countries while imports were made from at least 13 countries. The United States continued to be Canada's largest trading partner in petroleum products. Exports to Japan and the Far East increased by about 60 percent in 1987 over the previous year (Page 2).

Exports of petroleum products contributed significantly to refinery throughput in Canada. Product outturns for export were nine percent of total refinery throughput (Page 3).

The Come-by-Chance refinery in Newfoundland commenced operation in September 1987 after being closed since early 1976. Petroleum products produced at this refinery were mainly for export to the United States although a small amount was sold to the Newfoundland market (Page 4).

Exports of aviation turbine fuel from Ontario began in April 1987. There were no exports of aviation turbine fuel from this Province during 1986 (Appendix 1).

Exports of Petroleum Products in 1987

Introduction

Since June 1985, exporters of petroleum products have operated in a deregulated environment. After 12 years of restrictive licensing, the system was replaced by open orders. These orders are available to both Canadian and foreign companies and are issued by the Board upon receipt of a request from a potential exporter. The orders require that monthly reports be submitted to the Board specifying actual volumes of each product exported and the corresponding export prices. The information contained in these reports is used to provide advice to the Minister. In addition, the individual company information is aggregated and forwarded to interested parties.

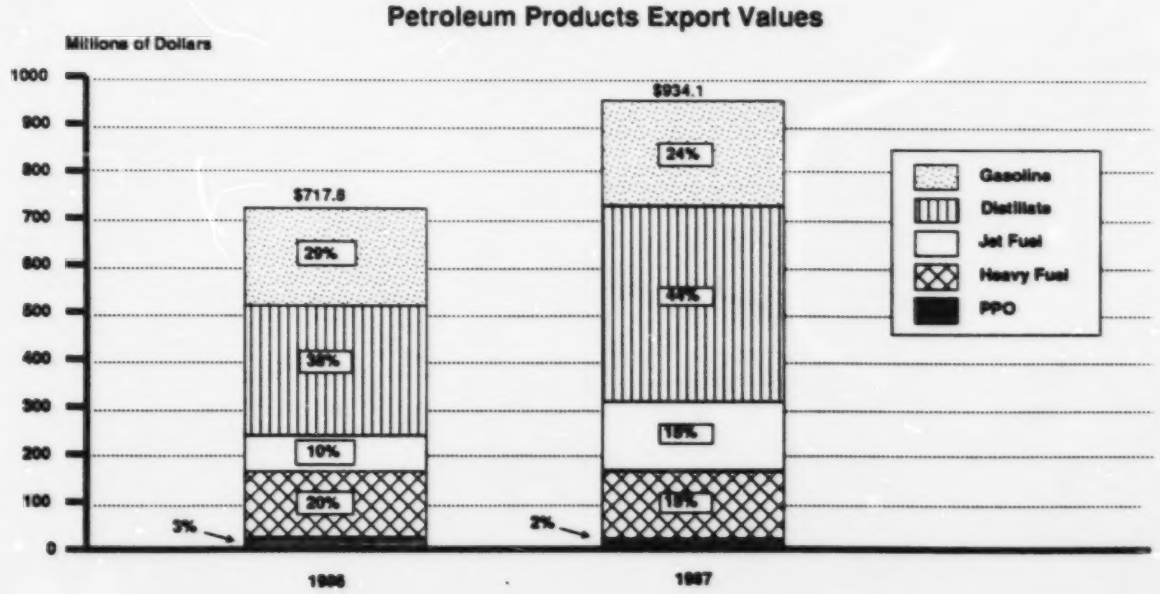
The petroleum products that require an export order from the Board are motor gasoline, middle distillate, aviation turbine fuel, heavy fuel oil and partially processed oil. The export of all other petroleum products and the import of any product can occur without authorization. This report will only address those products listed above.

Canada's International Trade in Petroleum Products

In 1987, Canada's sales of petroleum products reached $934.1 million in comparison to $717.8 million in 1986 (Figure 1). Excluded from these numbers is the value of products Canadian refiners produce under processing agreements with foreign oil companies.

Exporters of petroleum products can generally be divided into five groups: 1) Refiners who process crude oil to meet domestic demand, but who from time to time balance operations by imports or exports of petroleum products; 2) Refiners that have a base domestic demand but always have surplus refinery capacity to produce products for export; 3) Refiners which produce primarily for the export market. These refiners and those in the previous group are situated geographically to serve the export market; 4) Independent oil marketers who at times, balance their Canadian market demand by importing or exporting and may also import to take advantage of lower foreign prices; and 5) Independent marketers that operate solely to export petroleum products.

Figure 1



Historically, the United States market has received the largest share (about 90 to 95 percent) of product exported from Canada (Figure 2). This continued to be the case in 1987. However, it is interesting to note that during the past few years, Canadian refined products have been delivered to several different areas of the world as indicated in the adjacent table.

Destinations of Canadian Petroleum Product Exports

1986	1987
Australia	Japan
Caribbean	Korea
Cuba	St. Pierre et Miquelon
Japan	Taiwan
Korea	United States
Netherlands Antilles	
New Zealand	
Panama	
Samoa	
St. Pierre et Miquelon	
United States	

Figure 2
Origin and Destination of Product Exports 1987/(1986)

$10^3 m^3/d$

Although the destinations were not as diversified in 1987, there was a significant increase in deliveries to Far East countries. This was particularly advantageous for refineries located in British Columbia.

The United States received about 95 percent of Canada's exports in 1987 compared to 90 percent in 1986. The United States east coast continued to receive the largest amount followed by the Great Lakes region, the Northeast, Montana and the west coast, respectively (Figure 2).

The United States and Venezuela continued to be the major suppliers of petroleum products in 1987 with the Atlantic Provinces and Quebec being the primary import destinations. Last year, Canada received petroleum products from 13 countries including:

Algeria	Mexico	Spain
Belgium	Netherlands	Trinidad
France	Peru	United Kingdom
Italy	Saudi Arabia	United States
		Venezuela

In 1987, Canada received its first import of petroleum product (motor gasoline) from Saudi Arabia.

Demand Profile on Canadian Refineries

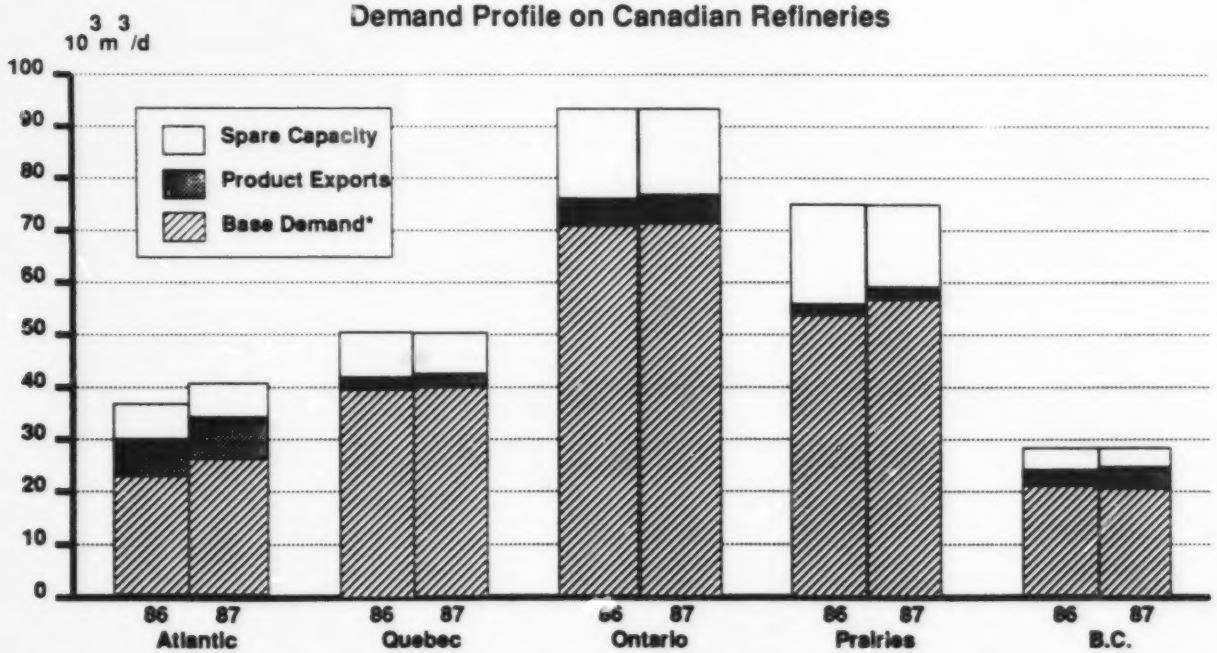
During 1987, product exports increased crude runs at Canadian refineries by nine percent. Crude runs in 1987 were 235.9 thousand cubic metres per day, an increase of 9.7 thousand cubic metres per day. On a national basis, refineries operated at about 83 percent of capacity, three percent higher than in 1986 (Figure 3).

Exports from the Atlantic Provinces represented 24 percent of that region's production. The start-up of the Come-By-Chance refinery in September, although experiencing some initial operating problems, helped increase operating levels to 84 percent of capacity in the region. Exports from British Columbia accounted for 16 percent of the refiners production allowing plants to operate at 87 percent of capacity; the highest level of any region in Canada.

The effect of exports on refineries in other regions did not change significantly from 1986 although Edmonton refineries did increase product transfers into British Columbia. Refineries in Quebec, Ontario and the Prairies used an average of 84, 82 and 79 percent, respectively, of their capacity.

Figure 3

Demand Profile on Canadian Refineries



*Base demand plus product exports equals crude runs

Export Volumes

In 1987, exports of petroleum products averaged 22.2 thousand cubic metres a day, a 15 percent increase from the 1986 level of 19.3 thousand cubic metres per day. Exports in 1987 accounted for nine percent of the feedstock processed in Canadian refineries which is the same as 1986.

During the first quarter 1986, product exports were low compared to 1987 because oil prices were dropping dramatically and oil markets were in a state of turmoil. In April 1986, exports increased significantly reflecting the opening of the navigation season on the Great Lakes and higher exports from refineries in British Columbia. Exports peaked during 1986 in September at 25 300 cubic metres per day as a result of substantial offshore sales of aviation turbine fuel. Subsequently, exports declined and in December they rose to 22 100 cubic metres a day as large movements were made from the Atlantic Provinces and Ontario prior to the close of the navigation season.

Exports in January 1987 were up significantly from January of the previous year. Surplus products refined in British Columbia during January found a home in the Far East and Japan. Large movements of middle distillate and motor gasoline from Ontario and the Prairies, respectively, also played a significant role in boosting export levels in January. Exports did not fluctuate greatly during the February to July period. In August, however, exports rose to about 23 700 cubic metres per day as a result of several cargo movements of light product from eastern Canada.

In October 1987, deliveries averged 33 000 cubic metres a day. This was the highest level of exports since the last month of regulation - May 1985. The startup of the Come-by-Chance refinery in Newfoundland during September and subsequent exports in October had a significant impact on the total volume shipped in this month. In addition, there were several cargoes of light product shipped from British Columbia to the United States west coast and the Pacific Rim. Also, a few shipments of middle distillate and heavy fuel oil were exported from the Atlantic Provinces and Quebec.

Table I sets out the exports of each product during 1986 in comparison to 1987. Exports of middle distillate and aviation turbine fuel registered the largest gains in 1987 compared to the previous year. Motor gasoline exports were slightly lower while shipments of heavy fuel oil and partially processed oil were approximately the same.

Figure 4

Exports of Petroleum Products
1986 vs 1987

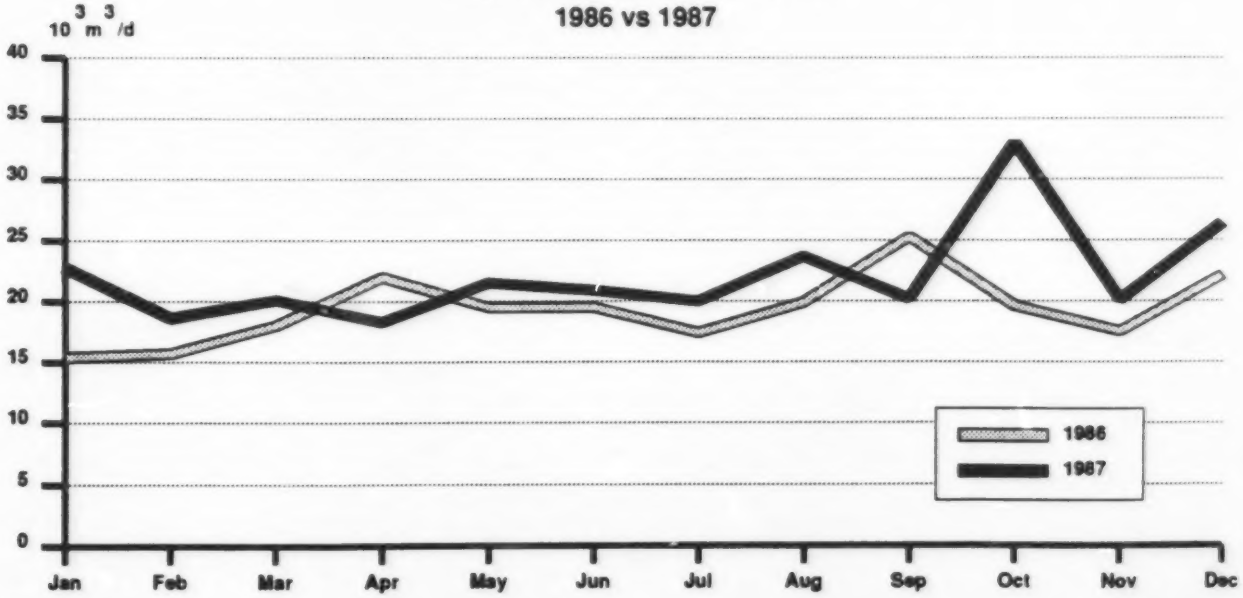


Table 1
Exports of Petroleum Products by Year
1986 vs 1987
(Thousands of Cubic Metres a Day)

	1986	1987	Difference
Motor Gasoline	5.6	5.4	(0.2)
Middle Distillate	8.1	9.8	1.7
Aviation Turbine Fuel	1.3	2.6	1.3
Heavy Fuel Oil	3.8	3.8	-
Partially Processed Oil	0.5	0.6	0.1
Total	19.3	22.2	2.9

Exports by Region

Appendix I provides a breakdown of exports by region and product type for 1986 and 1987. Regionally, the Atlantic Provinces continued its domination of exports in 1987 with 36 percent. This reflects the large volume of product exported under processing agreements with foreign oil companies. Ontario was the second largest exporter with 26 percent of the export volume which approximates the 1986 percentage. Exports from British Columbia equalled 17 percent compared to 15 percent in 1986. Exports sourced from Quebec and the Prairies represented 11 and 10 percent, respectively, of the volume shipped in 1987.

Exporters of Petroleum Products

In 1987, 39 companies exported petroleum products compared to 34 companies in 1986. Again in 1987, Irving was the largest exporter with about 31 percent of the total shipments from Canada followed by Imperial with 15 percent.

Refiners exported 85 percent of the product in 1987 compared to 88 percent the previous year. Olco, the largest independent exporter, moved up one position

Top 15 Exporters

1986		1987	
Exporter	**10^3m^3**	**Exporter**	**10^3m^3**
Irving Oil Ltd.	2 397	Irving Oil Ltd.	2 485
Imperial Oil Ltd.	1 329	Imperial Oil Ltd.	1 247
Shell Canada Products Ltd.	896	Shell Canada Products Ltd.	1 023
Petro-Canada Products Inc.	424	Petro-Canada Products Inc.	592
Olco Petroleum Group Inc.	281	Sunoco Inc.	347
Sunoco Inc.	278	Newfoundland Processing Limited	318
Turbo Resources Ltd.	199	Petrosar Limited	273
Chevron Canada Resources Ltd.	186	Universal Terminals Ltd.	255
The 300 Group	158	Turbo Resources Ltd.	234
Universal Terminals Ltd.	121	Chevron Canada Resources Ltd.	155
Comtrade Petroleum Inc.	116	Consumers Cooperative Refineries Limited	139
Consumers Cooperative Refineries Limited	68	Nor-Sphere Inc.	116
Ultramar Canada Inc.	65	The 300 Group	73
Texaco Canada Inc.	35	Comtrade Petroleum Inc.	73
Others	180	Others	362
	7061		**8101**

to fifth with five percent of the total volume shipped in 1987.

Two refiners dropped out of the top 15 exporters - Texaco and Ultramar, while two relatively new players (Newfoundland Processing and Nor-Sphere) joined the top 15 list. Ontario has the largest number of exporters with 27 companies. Of this number, 25 exported middle distillate in 1987. Many of these companies are also engaged in importing products into Ontario when price differentials make the reverse flow of trade profitable.

Import Volumes

In 1987, imports of petroleum products averaged 17.3 thousand cubic metres per day, an increase of 15 percent from 1986. This percentage increase is identical to the rise in exports. As in 1986, Canada remained a net exporter of petroleum products (Appendix I).

In both years, import levels fluctuated significantly from month to month as refiners and independents balanced their operations or when price differentials made imports economical. Imports reached their highest level since deregulation in February 1986, reflecting significant receipts of heavy fuel oil into the Atlantic Provinces and light products in Quebec. Companies sought to obtain lower priced products available offshore at the time when oil prices were falling rapidly in the first quarter of 1986. Imports also increased to meet demand following the closure of Gulf's Montreal refinery. Product imports rose gradually through the second quarter and reached 19.0 thousand cubic metres a day in July resulting from large receipts of gasoline and aviation turbine fuel. Following this, imports tailed off and then increased in the fourth quarter as is usual in preparation for the heating season.

In January 1987, imports reached 24.1 thousand cubic metres per day because of significant deliveries of middle distillate (8.2 thousand cubic metres per day) and aviation turbine fuel (3.8 thousand cubic metres per day) into Quebec.

Subsequently, import volumes remained in the teens until the fourth quarter at which time they increased marginally reflecting a resurgence in receipts of middle distillate and aviation turbine fuel.

Table 2 illustrates the import of each product during 1986 in comparison to 1987. Heavy fuel oil increased the most while middle distillate registered a significant decrease. The rise in imports of aviation turbine fuel that began in 1986 continued through 1987.

Figure 5

Imports of Petroleum Products

1986 vs 1987

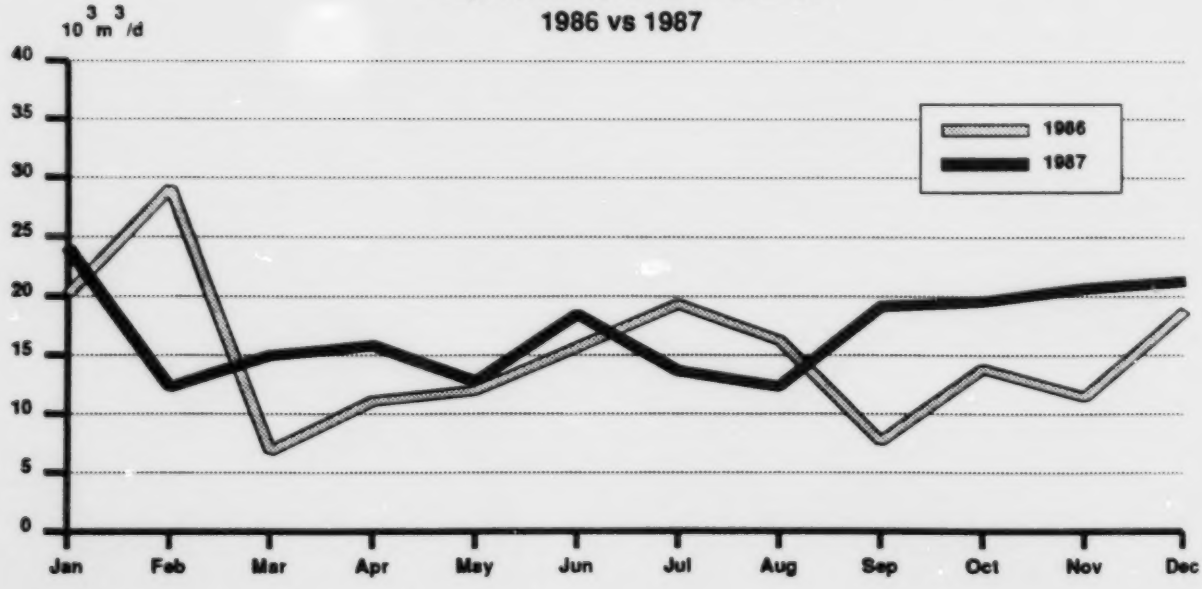


Table 2
Imports of Petroleum Products
1986 vs 1987
(Thousands of Cubic Metres a Day)

	1986	1987	Difference
Motor Gasoline	3.3	4.1	0.8
Middle Distillate	5.1	3.8	(1.3)
Aviation Turbine Fuel	1.8	2.0	0.2
Heavy Fuel Oil	4.5	6.5	2.0
Partially Processed Oil	0.5	0.9	0.4
Total	15.1	17.3	2.2

Imports by Region

Appendix I shows a breakdown of imports by region and product type for 1986 and 1987. In 1987, the province of Quebec continued to have the greatest need for imports, particularly light petroleum products. Receipts of light products in Quebec during 1987 equalled 6.7 thousand cubic metres per day versus 6.1 thousand cubic metres per day in 1986. The Atlantic Provinces followed Quebec, however, 75 percent of the Atlantic's imports consisted of heavy fuel oil which reflects the strong demand in this region for electricity generation requirements. In 1987, imports into Ontario declined by 28 percent while deliveries into British Columbia increased by 58 percent to about 760 cubic metres per day.

Export Prices

This section deals with export prices obtained during 1987 in comparison to several yardsticks. In this section, export prices are measured against corresponding prices in Canada and the United States and, in certain instances, import prices.

Export prices for each product can differ sometimes significantly from one region to another and, in addition,vary in accordance with the type of market they are delivered into. As mentioned at the outset, exporters can be grouped into five different categories and depending on their unique situation, export returns can also differ widely.

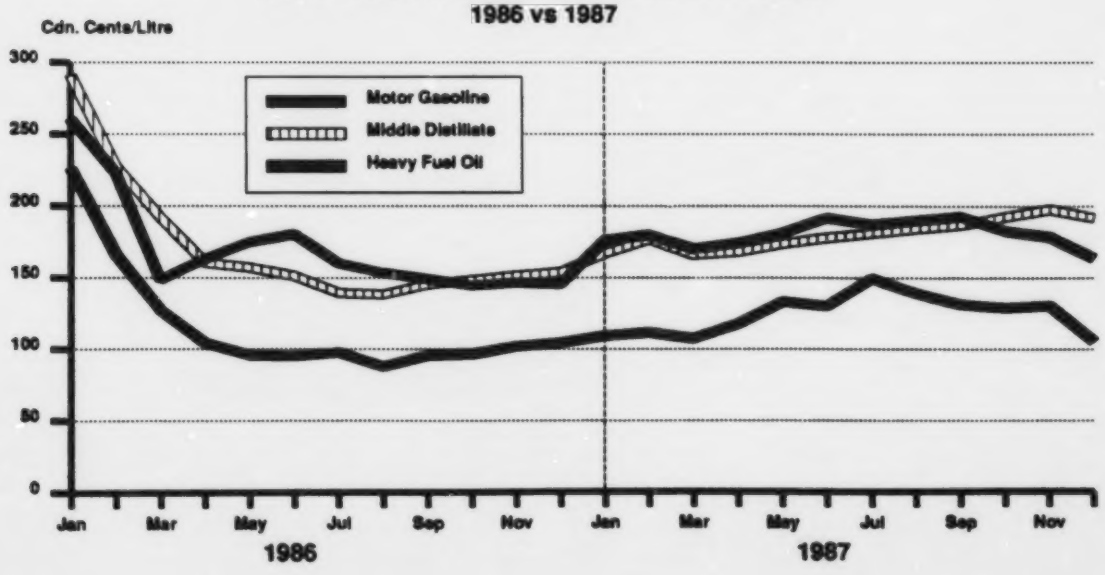
Export prices for each of the main petroleum products have been averaged to highlight the general price patterns during 1987 rather than concentrate on prices of particular exports which may vary for the many reasons stated previously. The same procedure was used where possible with respect to import prices.

Average Export Prices

Figure 6 provides the average export prices for main petroleum products (motor gasoline, middle distillate and heavy fuel oil) for 1986 and 1987. In 1987, product prices recovered significantly from their dramatic decline of over 50 percent in the early part of 1986.

Figure 6

F.O.B. Export Prices for Main Petroleum Products
1986 vs 1987



With respect to motor gasoline, the export price strengthened during the second quarter 1986, when gasoline prices are normally strong because of the upcoming driving season. Following this, it tended to decline gradually through to the end of the year. Export prices in early 1987 were about 3.5 cents per litre higher than in the fourth quarter 1986. This reflects higher spot prices in the United States resulting from several major refinery turnarounds. It is interesting to note that the contraseasonal strength of gasoline prices for exports from British Columbia during the first quarter 1987 was sufficient to propel the gasoline export price above the distillate price. After a slight decline in March and April, export prices were relatively strong during the May to September period. The November and December declines reflect seasonal softness and high inventories in the United States.

Following a decline in March and April 1987, distillate export prices strengthened through November and then fell in December due to weak demand. Distillate export prices were higher than gasoline during the dramatic price decline in the January to March 1986 period but in 1987 remained below gasoline prices until the fourth quarter.

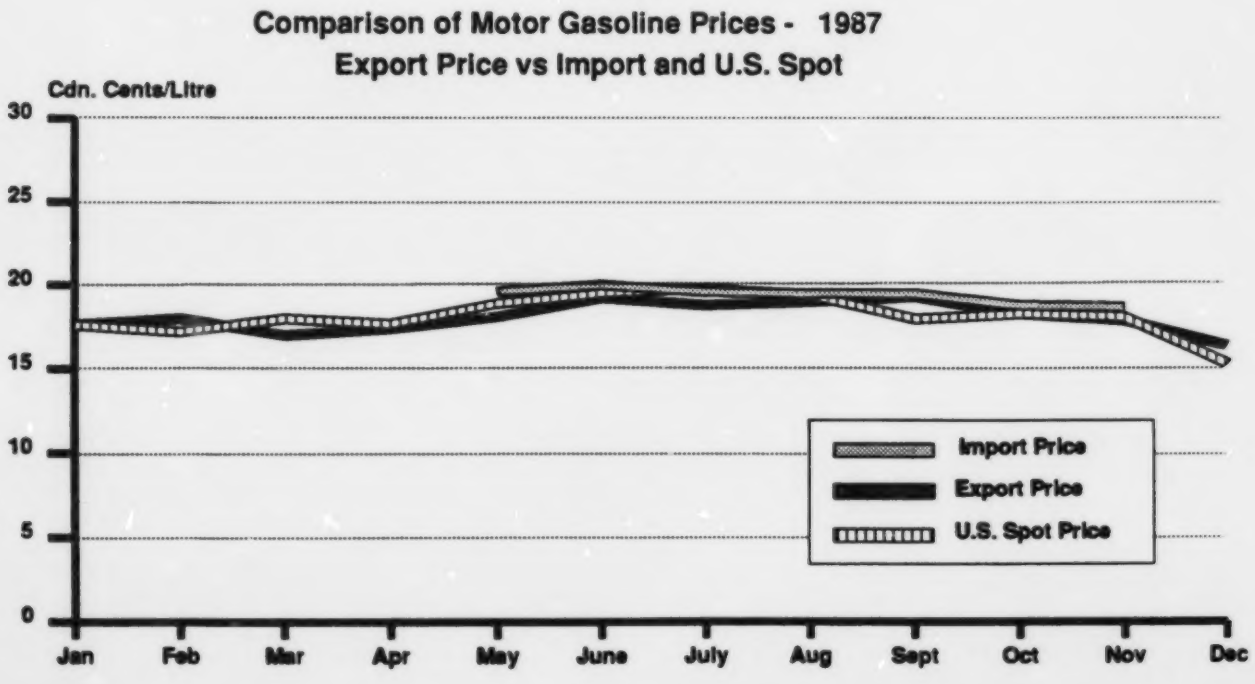
Export prices for heavy fuel oil during 1986 and 1987 were always below those for light products which is consistent with heavy fuel being a by-product of the refining process. Heavy fuel oil prices peaked in July 1987 at 15 cents per litre and then declined by two cents per litre to end the year at about 13 cents a litre.

Export Prices versus Import Prices and United States Spot Prices

In this section we have compared the average price for exports to the spot price in the United States. For gasoline, we have also plotted the import price for comparison. The import price for distillate and heavy fuel has not been plotted because of the confidential nature of the pricing data supplied by individual companies.

As indicated earlier in this report, the United States is Canada's major export customer and exports from Canada generally compete against product available at spot prices in the United States market. Spot product prices usually relate to cargo or pipeline quantities. However, in certain instances, tank truck deliveries are being made at spot related prices rather than tank wagon prices which are normally quoted on smaller quantities and are therefore generally higher. Again, this will depend on the market being served. The 'Oil Price Information Service' provides average United States spot prices for gasoline and No. 2 fuel oil and these have been used in the following price comparisons for 1987.

Figure 7



Motor Gasoline

Figure 7 sets out by month the average export price for motor gasoline, the average import cost and the average United States spot price for unleaded gasoline. The majority of gasoline exported from and imported into Canada is unleaded with the remainder consisting of both regular leaded grade and gasoline blending components.

In 1987, the export price remained relatively close to the United States spot price. The largest variance during the year occurred in September and December as the United States spot price declined as a result of high inventories and the seasonal decline in demand. The export price increased in September because of strong returns on exports from eastern Canada and British Columbia.

The average import price has been consistently higher than the export price. The difference primarily reflects the fact that the import costs include freight and insurance costs while the export price is that at the point of loading.

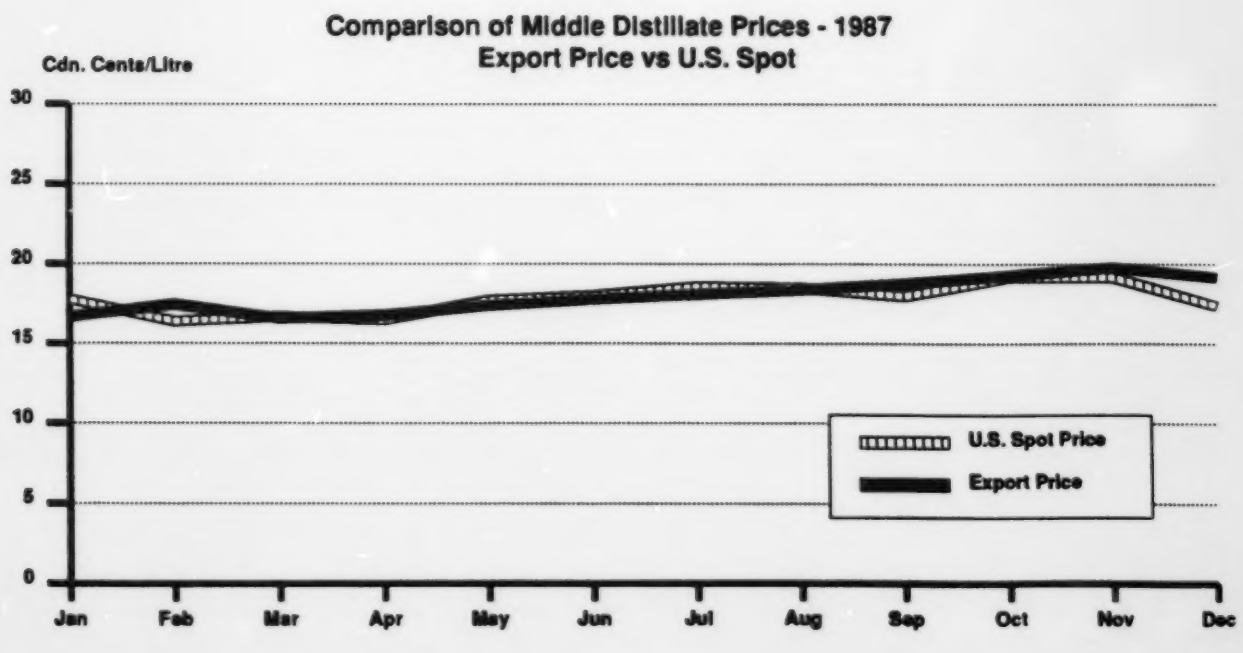
Middle Distillate

Figure 8 shows the average export price and the average United States spot price for No. 2 fuel oil by month for 1987. We have not included the average import price as there are an insufficient number of companies reporting to allow this price to be included in the graph.

For most months, both prices were very close which illustrates the point that Canadian companies generally base their export prices on United States spot prices.

In February, however, the U.S. spot price declined from January while the export price increased marginally. High refinery production and inventories in the United States as well as a decrease in United States crude oil prices resulted in a reduction in spot product prices in that month. The decline was more pronounced for No. 2 fuel than for gasoline (Figure 7). The export price was higher in February because of a significant amount of distillate that was exported by truck transport in comparison to other months during 1987.

Figure 8



Again in September, the United States spot price declined, reflecting high inventories and a drop in spot crude prices. The largest spread between export price and spot price occurred in December. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, demand for middle distillate was quite weak even though inventories in the United States were 20 to 25 million barrels below December 1986. Secondly, exports by truck transport from Ontario and Quebec to upstate New York received very good returns. Excluding these exports by truck, the export price would have been only marginally higher than the United States spot price.

Heavy Fuel Oil

The Oil Price Information Service does not provide an average United States spot price for heavy fuel oil. In this report we have employed the New York spot price for 2.2 percent sulphur material as published by Oil Buyers' Guide. Figure 9 shows the average export price in comparison to the average New York spot price. As was the case with middle distillate, we have not included the average import price.

During the first half of the year, there was essentially a constant differential between the two prices with the New York spot price being higher. There are several reasons for the high spot price including low fuel oil inventories in the United States and Venezuela, tight supply of Western Hemisphere heavy crudes and unusually strong spot demand in the United States.

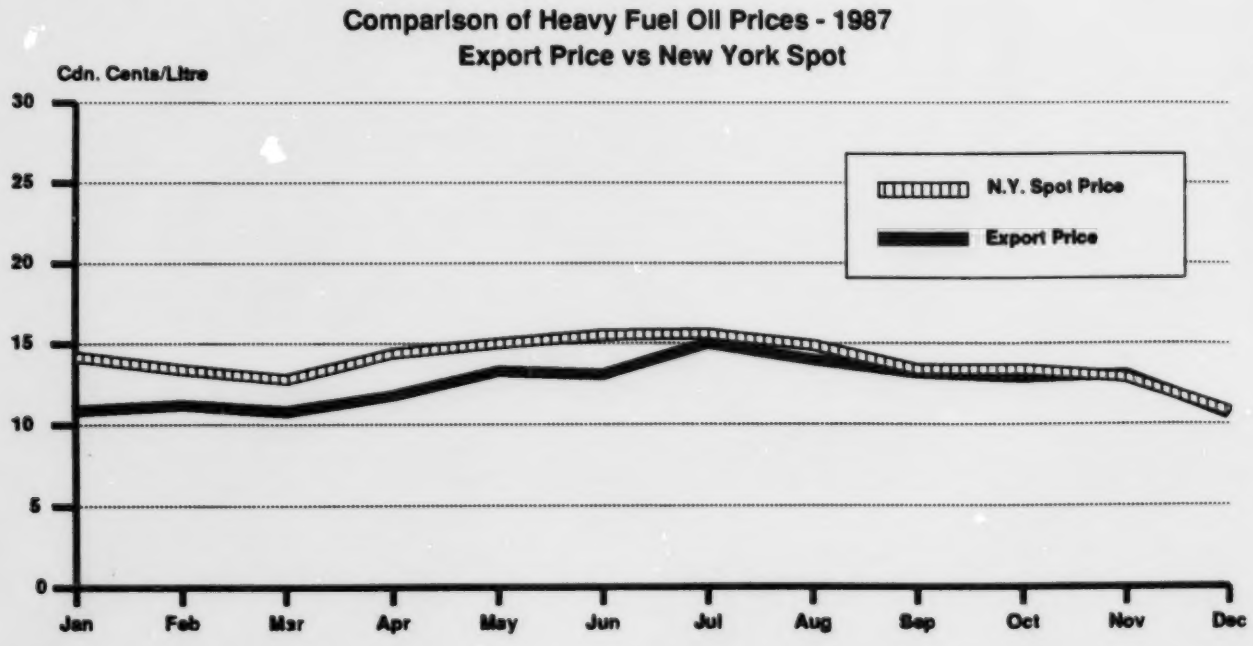
In the summer months, several cargoes of heavy fuel oil were shipped from Quebec and Ontario to the United States east coast where spot prices were relatively strong because of a seasonal heat wave that caused unusually high requirements for heavy fuel oil by electric power utilities. During the last half of 1987 both prices were relatively close.

Export Prices versus Rack Prices and Spot Prices

This section deals with export prices in comparison to Ontario rack prices and Ontario spot prices.

Imperial Oil introduced rack pricing on June 1, 1985 for certain light petroleum products. Since then, other companies including Shell, Sunoco, Turbo and Ultramar have followed suit; in early 1988, Petro-Canada also adopted rack pricing. Rack pries are reported regularly in the trade press. They are reported net of federal sales and excise taxes and provincial sales taxes. Rack prices are quoted by refiners for large volume sales to private brand resellers and are applicable at most primary distribution terminals.

Figure 9



In the early days of rack pricing, the rack price was the invoiced price. However, during most of 1987, certain buyers were reportedly obtaining discounts off the rack prices - in some cases, up to 2 cents a litre on gasoline. Discounts on distillate were slightly lower. Oil Buyers' Guide provides in its Canadian Terminal Prices section a bulk spot price which has been plotted on the following graphs. For comparison purposes, we have used export prices from Ontario, the rack and bulk spot price for Toronto. Rack prices are not quoted by sellers for heavy fuel oil and aviation fuel.

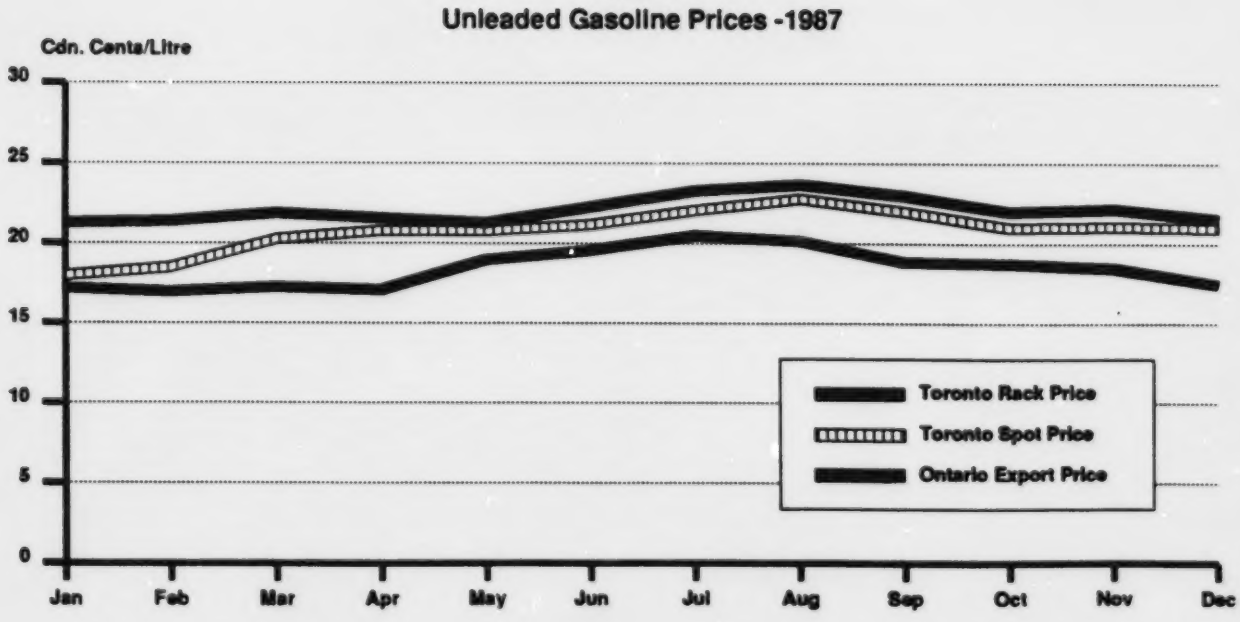
Motor Gasoline

Figure 10 shows that the average Ontario export price for unleaded gasoline was consistently below the Toronto rack price whereas the Toronto bulk spot price fluctuated between these two levels.

The largest difference between the rack and export price was about 4.5 cents a litre in the February to April period. The lowest differential of about 2.5 cents per litre occurred during the next three months. The average differential for the year was 3.6 cents a litre.

The difference between export and bulk spot price is much smaller. The largest difference of 3.7 cents a litre occurred in March and the smallest of about 1.5 cents per litre was in February, June and July. The average difference during 1987 was 2.3 cents per litre.

Figure 10



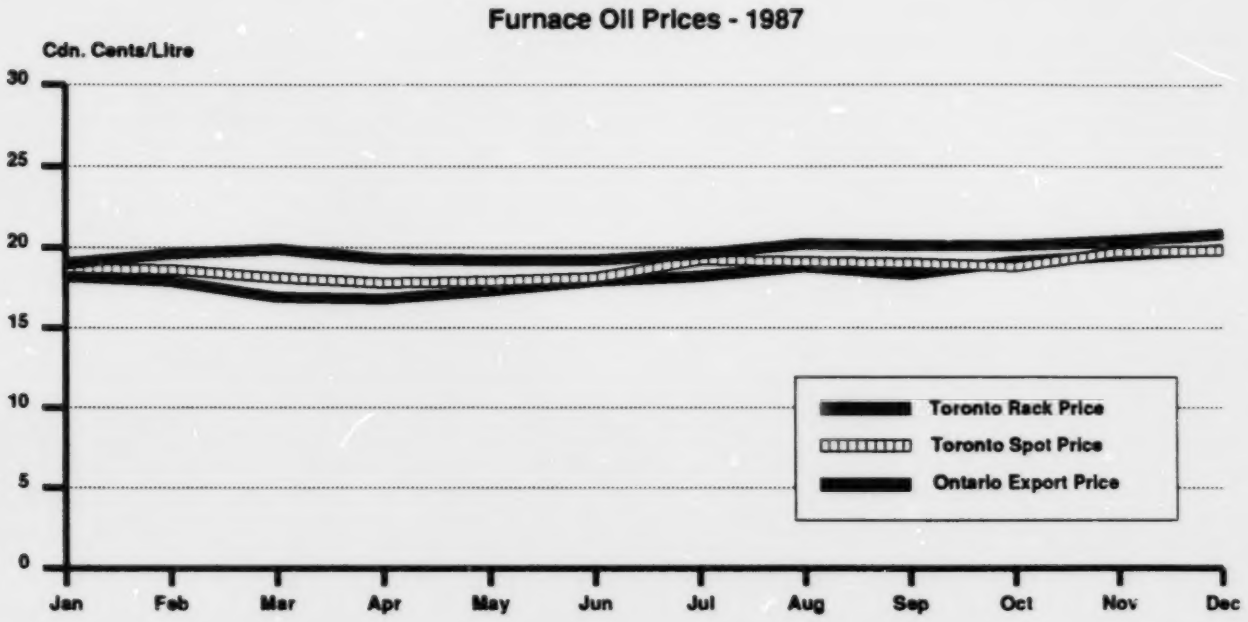
Middle Distillate

Figure 11 illustrates the average prices for exports from Ontario, Toronto rack and Toronto bulk spot for furnace oil during 1987.

With the exception of the March to May period, all three prices remained relatively close during 1987. The largest difference between export and rack occurred in March at 3.0 cents a litre and smallest of about 0.8 cents per litre was in January and the fourth quarter. The average differential for 1987 was 1.6 cents a litre.

The average difference between export and bulk spot is even smaller at some 0.5 cents a litre. In two instances during 1987, the export price was slightly higher than the bulk spot price.

Figure 11



EXPORTS OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS - 1986 VERSUS 1987
(Thousands of Cubic Metres)

REGION	MOTOR GASOLINE		MIDDLE DISTILLATE		AVIATION TURBINE FUEL		HEAVY FUEL OIL		PARTIALLY PROCESSED OIL		TOTAL	
	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987
Atlantic	996	902	1 312	1 357	95	201	174	274	-	175	2 577	2 909
Quebec	33	44	287	475	-	-	291	343	137	34	748	896
Ontario	409	213	715	1 051	-	147	870	674	9	15	2 003	2 100
Prairies	226	214	305	363	109	149	45	79	-	-	685	805
B.C.	378	598	355	324	286	441	-	17	29	11	1 048	1 391
TOTAL	2 042	1 971	2 974	3 570	490	938	1 380	1 387	175	235	7 061	8 101
TOTAL ($10^3m^3/d$)	5.6	5.4	8.1	9.8	1.3	2.6	3.8	3.8	0.5	0.6	19.3	22.2

IMPORTS OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS - 1986 VERSUS 1987
(Thousands of Cubic Metres)

REGION	MOTOR GASOLINE		MIDDLE DISTILLATE		AVIATION TURBINE FUEL		HEAVY FUEL OIL		PARTIALLY PROCESSED OIL		TOTAL	
	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987
Atlantic	44	192	715	448	110	64	1 476	2 057	-	-	2 345	2 761
Quebec	988	1 113	881	876	375	469	106	177	192	302	2 542	2 937
Ontario	162	169	181	18	122	128	-	2	-	17	465	334
Prairies	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
B.C.	-	15	76	32	43	86	55	143	1	-	175	276
TOTAL	1 194	1 495	1 853	1 374	650	747	1 637	2 379	193	319	5 527	6 314
TOTAL ($10^3m^3/d$)	3.3	4.1	5.1	3.8	1.8	2.0	4.5	6.5	0.5	0.9	15.1	17.3
NET EXPORTS/(IMPORTS)	2.3	1.3	3.0	6.0	(0.5)	0.6	(0.7)	(2.7)	-	(0.3)	4.2	4.9